

Inspection of a good school: Wimbledon College

Edge Hill, London SW19 4NS

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

Wimbledon College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a school community with a shared aim of being 'men and women for others'. Pupils regularly undertake charitable work, including fundraising events for chosen charities. Pupils take pride in collecting house points for their conduct, including for making a positive contribution to the school community.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to have an enriching experience at the school. Pupils make good use of the broad array of opportunities that leaders organise. One parent, capturing the views of many parents and carers, said, 'There really is something for every boy at Wimbledon.' Many pupils benefit from overseas travel, including skiing in Austria, a rugby tour to Lisbon and the annual French exchange to Toulouse.

Pupils are respectful and motivated to learn. They work hard in lessons. They rarely disrupt each other's learning. Leaders communicate clear expectations, which all members of the school community understand well. Where bullying does occur, leaders deal with it effectively. Pupils are happy and safe here.

Pupils have many opportunities to take up responsibility. Pupil representatives identify changes to improve the school, such as protecting the environment by installing recycling points and lights on timers.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have ensured that there is a broad and varied curriculum in place, including in the sixth form. Most pupils study the English Baccalaureate subjects at GCSE. Leaders have added new courses in Years 10 and 11 to offer pupils even more choice, including technical and vocational courses. Younger pupils in Years 7 to 9 study a wide range of subjects that prepare them well to choose from the courses on offer later.

Teachers and leaders know what important knowledge pupils must master to prepare them for more complex tasks later. Teachers provide activities that are well designed to

help pupils learn the planned curriculum. Most pupils complete this work in its entirety. However, in some cases, pupils do not get on to the more demanding tasks that require them to apply their knowledge of facts. As a result, they do not develop their knowledge of the curriculum in as much depth as leaders intend.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They use it particularly well to help pupils engage in considered discussion about what they are learning. As a result, pupils generally articulate their knowledge of subjects well. For example, in art lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate how successfully they have used formal elements to achieve certain effects in their own artwork. Teachers in the sixth form give students carefully planned support to develop highly-detailed knowledge.

Teachers check pupils' understanding at set points in the curriculum. They use assessment information to provide pupils with guidance about what they should do to get better at the subjects they study. However, some teaching does not check pupils' understanding of the curriculum as systematically. As a result, some pupils' misconceptions are not quickly identified and corrected.

Teachers understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers and support staff choose carefully when to offer extra help and when to allow pupils to work without interruption. As a result, pupils with SEND grow in independence and are well prepared for their next steps, including those in the sixth form.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to read often in lessons and as part of structured homework tasks, including in the sixth form. Pupils read with fluency. Leaders identify pupils who need extra help with their reading and provide appropriate support.

Leaders carefully consider what to teach pupils to prepare them well for the future, including important information about health, relationships and the world around them. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities they have to learn about their next steps, including hearing from a wide range of interesting speakers, taking up work experience and visiting employers and universities.

Leaders ensure a calm, orderly environment for pupils. Pupils conduct themselves responsibly and with respect during lesson time and around the school. Leaders focus on helping pupils to understand how their behaviour relates to the school's Jesuit principles. Occasionally, younger pupils do not demonstrate the same high levels of respect for others as the older pupils. As a result, some younger pupils felt that their peers are not routinely as kind as they might be.

Staff are proud to work at this school and felt well cared for. Leaders support the professional development of staff, and their well-being. Staff said that leaders usually take their workload into account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including the governing body, have worked closely together to improve systems for safeguarding pupils. They have established a large, well-trained team, who meet regularly to check that no pupil who may be at risk is overlooked. Staff receive regular, quality training and know what to look out for. They report concerns appropriately.

Leaders engage with a range of external support to ensure pupils get the help they need, including with their mental health. Pupils know whom to go to should they need support or need to report any concerns.

Leaders consider carefully what pupils should be taught about how to stay safe. Pupils said they value the information they receive at school about staying safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some cases, teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding to identify and correct misconceptions and to provide them with clear feedback to improve their learning. As a result, sometimes, pupils' work contains misconceptions, and some pupils do not know as clearly as others how to improve. Leaders should ensure that teachers systematically assess pupils' understanding and provide feedback in all subjects.
- In some instances, pupils do not complete all of the work given by their teachers, often completing the simpler tasks set but not routinely going on to complete the more demanding work given. As a result, some pupils do not practise and consolidate what they have learned and develop their knowledge of the curriculum as well as leaders intend. Leaders should ensure that all groups of pupils learn the school's curriculum in the intended depth.
- A minority of younger pupils do not demonstrate the same high levels of respect as their older counterparts. As a result, some other younger pupils report experiencing name-calling and some unkind behaviour. Leaders should follow through with their work to teach pupils about the importance of respect and tolerance toward others.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	102681
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10255448
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,246
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Murphy
Headteacher	Adrian Laing
Website	www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic voluntary-aided school in the Archdiocese of Southwark, under the Trusteeship of the Society of Jesus. The school's last section 48 inspection was in December 2022.
- The school uses the following alternative provider: Melbury College at The Chaucer Centre.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and languages. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to teachers, and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' health and safety as well as their welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with other leaders, including those with responsibility for behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing body, a representative of the Diocese of Southwark, a representative of the Society of Jesus and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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